INTRODUCTION.

The London Maymester program is a joint project between the School of Law and The Honourable Society of Gray’s Inn, one of the four London Inns of Court that manage the English justice system. This information sheet is intended to provide a general description of the program. Descriptions herein are subject to change, but plenty of notice would be given.

SUBJECT MATTER.

The program is organized around a School of Law course entitled Transnational Dispute Resolution. Content will include comparative US/English legal institutions, international civil litigation, and international arbitration.

COURSE CREDIT.

This is a serious law school course worth four credit hours, with a commensurate amount of class preparation required. Grades will be based on a 6-hour, take-home-open-everything final exam after the course is concluded. The exam may be picked up from a TWEN site, or physically at the Law School, and answers may be returned by internet, or physically, at any time during the first two weeks of June convenient to the individual student. The course satisfies the graduation requirement of completion of at least one “perspective” course.

SCHEDULE.

Introductory meetings will be held in Columbia during Fall 2015 and Spring 2016. A mandatory introductory meeting and lecture will take place at Gray’s Inn, London, at 3 p.m. on the afternoon of Sunday, May 8, 2016. Class will be held during the weeks of May 9, 16 and 23, on each MTWTh morning beginning at 8:30 a.m., with some required activities (such as visits to the Law Courts) on MTW afternoons.

ATTENDANCE.

The usual School of Law attendance policy, which corresponds with University policy and the American Bar Association accreditation requirements, will be in effect.
The principal faculty are Professors McWilliams and Samuels. Guest speakers will be drawn from the English and European Bar, courts and universities.

**Location.**

The course will be taught at Gray’s Inn, one of the four London Inns of Court. The course administrative office is also located at the Inn. Check out the Gray’s Inn web site at Graysinn.org.uk. The website describes the Inn’s location (near the Chancery Lane Tube stop and the Law Courts). A web site called central-london-apartments.com has a useful map showing Gray’s Inn on the border between the upper right and left quadrants. The Holborn and Russell Square stops are also nearby.

Gray’s Inn permits our students to participate in their Easter Dining Term, a series of dinners for Gray’s Inn student barristers, benchers, and judges. More detail on this feature will be provided later.

**Required Books.**

All course materials will be provided at no cost. Guest speakers often provide supplemental handouts.

**Library and Study Space.**

Gray’s Inn has common spaces for students and a law library to which we will have access. Internet access is available in the library and wi-fi access in our lecture room and, for those who chose to take advantage of them, our student accommodations. Other nearby public institutions, such as the British Museum and the nearby public library, have public reading rooms and other resources.

**Computers.**

You won’t be required to have a computer. Many students do bring one. Should you wish to bring one, either be sure that it’s compatible with British current (most modern laptops are) or bring a converter. You will also need a gadget to adapt your two-prong power plug to three-prong British style. As an alternative to bringing a computer, London has many “web cafes” that provide word processing and printing capability and cheap access to the internet. The Inn’s library offers web access and public libraries provide free access. The student lodging arranged by the program provides wireless internet.

**Air Travel.**

Travel arrangements are on your own. This is for two reasons. First, not everyone will want to go and return on the same dates. Second, experience shows that you can find cheaper flights on the web than can be obtained through block booking.
For cheap student fares check out Studentuniverse.com. There’s also Orbitz, Sidestep, and so on. Try putting “discount air fares” into your Google search window. Extremely low fares are available from New York at times, for those able to get themselves to New York.

Book air tickets early unless you’re willing to take a chance on deeply discounted last minute fares. As to exact travel dates, be flexible, although you’ll want to match up your travel dates as closely as possible with lodging dates and the course schedule.

**Lodging.**

The program offers students suite-style accommodation convenient to Gray’s Inn, based on bedrooms with two twin beds, fully furnished, and including kitchens and laundry facilities, linens, and free wi-fi. A more detailed description of the accommodation will be distributed along with registration materials. The Law School London Maymester website has a link to a description of the lodging provided by the program.

For those choosing not to use the University-provided accommodations, lodging is on your own. Suggestions for making your own arrangements:

- Again, check out Studentuniverse.com. They offer hostel-type lodging, and travel arrangements, among other things. When you get to the website, click on “hostels”, then click on “buy now.” You’ll be prompted to enter a country, city and dates. Then “enter,” and you’ll find a huge menu ranging upward from $14/night dorm type arrangements.
- Alternatively, just put “student lodging London” into your search engine.
- Or try putting “short let apartments London” into your search window. Groups taking a flat together can find comfortable accommodations at reasonable prices.

When considering booking lodging on your own, remember to check for laundry arrangements, kitchens, and convenience to the Inn either by walking or by public transport. Again, the closest Tube stops are Chancery Lane, Holborn, and Russell Square.

Meals.

For the most part, food will be on your own. It is more expensive in London than in Columbia, so you’ll want to budget and plan. Our accommodations have fully equipped kitchens. There are many decent and relatively inexpensive places to eat near the Inn, and there are grocery stores nearby.
Laundry and Dry Cleaning: Clothing.

Laundry facilities are something to take into account in making lodging decisions. Directly across the street from the Inn there is a dry cleaner that does fluff laundry. There are also laundry facilities in the accommodations arranged by the program.

You will need at least one dress-up outfit to wear for “dining in Hall” at the Inn and visiting the courts. This should be a black, dark gray, or navy-blue suit for guys, with white shirts and ties, and the equivalent for women. Those who register for the course will get further advice on this sort of thing. It’s okay for women to wear trousers.

Passport and Visa Letter.

To enter Britain and to return to the US you’ll need a passport that will be valid for at least six months after you arrive in Europe or the UK. If you don’t have one, and you’re even remotely thinking of coming on this trip, go ahead and get a passport now, because it can take some time. The Post Office has the forms. Best is the Assembly Street Post Office. Do not pack your passport. You’ll need it for check-in and boarding at the airport, and you’ll need to present it at passport control upon arriving in England.

The British Home Office requires students to present a “visa letter” at passport control when entering the country. Those registered for the program will be issued appropriate letters. Do not pack these letters. You’ll need to present them along with your passport upon arriving in England.

Foreign Exchange.

If you plan to bring £ with you, your local bank can obtain it for you, but be sure to plan for this in advance, as it can take time. Travelers’ cheques are not advised.

In London, just about everything can be paid for with a VISA card or MasterCard. American Express is not as widely accepted. Most credit cards impose a charge for foreign-currency transactions.

To obtain local currency from cash machines, use your debit card, just like you do in the US. US card issuers charge fees for this service. Check to see whether your card issuer has a no-fee arrangement with one of the British banks. Bank of America, for example, has an arrangement with Barclays Bank.

To obtain £ from cash machines in London use your debit card, not a credit card. Using a credit card to obtain local currency from a cash machine is treated by US banks as a cash advance, and interest is charged from the time of the withdrawal.
**State Department Travel Advisories.**

The State Department issues travel advisories from time to time. The School of Law will keep an eye on these and pass along any that affect our travel period. You can also check them yourselves on line.

**Tuition; Financial Aid; Registration.**

Course tuition for the four-hour course will be about $3,948. This rate applies to both in- and out-of-state students. A $250 non-refundable deposit, credited against the tuition charge, will be required to confirm placement (make checks payable to the University of South Carolina), due at the time of pre-registration. Register for the course by completing the registration form (available on the program website) and submitting it, along with your deposit check, to the Law School Registrar. Pre-registration will begin in November, before the Thanksgiving holiday. The course usually comes close to filling up when pre-registration opens.

Students intending to rely on financial aid should consult Dean Palmer in Student Affairs. To be eligible for Federal aid a student must be “full time,” which, for the summer, means six hours. Some private lenders require only four hours. Private lenders generally offer less attractive rates and are limited to students with good credit. There will be a series of non-mandatory information meetings in October and November at which a presentation on financial aid will be made.

Most sources of student aid permit aid to be used to pay the student’s airfare and living expenses (but not those of a spouse). Your financial aid source may require you to submit a proposed budget. A hypothetical budget is posted on the London Maymester website.

Those intending to apply for loan funds for London Maymester should complete the 2016 London Maymester financial-aid application, available from Dean Palmer’s office. The application may take a few weeks to be processed, so we encourage you to apply no later than March 1. Funds will be disbursed in early May, 2016. If you have questions about financial aid, consult Dean Palmer.

Those who need six credit hours to qualify as full-time for student aid purposes should register as summer students either for a two-hour research paper or for some other summer course of at least two credit hours. Students relying on a legal-research paper must find a faculty sponsor for their paper and confirm a topic prior to leaving for London.

**Health and Trip Insurance.**

Health insurance is required. It is provided through the University at about $30 per person. Signup for the required insurance takes place during the Spring semester.
The number of spaces available is limited. Early registration is recommended. 

*Cheers!*